

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently amended) A character recognition method for accurately constructing a result string ~~from a plurality of results sets generated by processing an input string, each result set comprising at least one candidate character with an associated confidence indication~~, the method comprising the steps of:

generating a digital representation of an input string including characters;

generating a result set for each character in the input string, each result set including a plurality of candidate characters and a plurality of associated confidence indications indicative of successful recognition of the corresponding candidate character;

selecting a plurality of character types;

for each selected character type, creating a candidate string by concatenating a candidate character with a most favorable corresponding confidence indication of the selected character type from each result set;

for each created candidate string, combining the associated confidence indication for each concatenated candidate character to form a corresponding combined confidence indication; and

selecting as the result string the created candidate string with a most favorable corresponding combined confidence indication.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein:

each confidence indication is numeric; and

the most favorable corresponding combined confidence indication has a greatest combined value.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the combined numeric value is a weighted average.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of: if there is no candidate character in a result set for a character type, extracting a substitute candidate character of a different character type and ascribing a substitute associated confidence indication for the substitute candidate character.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein at least one of the selected character types includes a plurality of subset character types.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5 wherein the at least one of the selected character types further includes a pattern for positioning the candidate characters of the plurality of subset character types in the corresponding created candidate string.